

and the salt thereof, wherein

M is a hydrogen atom, an ammonium ion, a monovalent metal ion or an equivalent of a divalent metal ion of the groups Ia, IIa, IIb, IVa or VIIIb of the Periodic Table of the Elements;

R¹ is OH [or NR⁴R⁵, wherein R⁴ and R⁵ independently of one another are H or C₁-C₆-alkyl];

R² is H or an alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl or aryl group, wherein the alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, and aryl group are unsubstituted or substituted with 1, 2 or 3 substituents which are chosen independently of one another from C₁-C₆-alkyl, OH, O-C₁-C₆-alkyl, halogen and CF₃; and

R³ is COOM[, SO₃M, COR⁴, CONR⁴R⁵] or COOR⁴; and [or

R³ is H, provided that when R³ is H R² is unsubstituted aryl or aryl substituted with 1, 2 or 3 substituents which are chosen independently of one another from C₁-C₆-alkyl, OH, O-C₁-C₆-alkyl, halogen and CF₃.]

R⁴ and R⁵ independently of one another are H or C₁-C₆ alkyl.

(Twice Amended) The sulfinic acid compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein R³ is COOM [or COOR⁴].

(Twice Amended) The sulfinic acid compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein

M is an alkali metal ion or an equivalent of an alkaline earth metal ion or zinc ion;
and

[R¹ is OH or NH₂];

R² is H or alkyl]; and

R³ is COOM or COOR⁴, wherein R⁴ is H or C₁-C₆-alkyl].

(Twice Amended) A compound of the formulae:

